



CHRISTMAS AT GRANDMA'S [About 1920] On back of photo: Arthur W, Grandpa Hilary, Walter Gibson [Sallie's husband] RG & his kids [holding Bill] Front: Warren, Lola & Elvin.

Douglas Historical Society Requests Wells Family Pioneer Memorabilia

For some years now, the Douglas Historical Society has requested our family's memorabilia for their museum. Les Stimac has been working with them now and has donated the WWII uniform of war hero, Captain David L. Wells. David was born and raised in Douglas. After graduating he moved to Pomona California where he joined the Army. He fought in Europe and received the French Croix De Guerre, the Belgium Croix du Guerre, a unit citation from President Truman and a Silver Star medal for gallantry in action—"Not bad," he said, "for an ol' country boy just trying to stay alive." He later worked for the California Dept. of Corrections where he retired after 25 years.

The Wells family settled in the Douglas area around 1904. Their holdings covered about 7,000 acres in the Douglas area, including a quarry that produced much of the stone for downtown Douglas buildings. After brick products made the quarry unprofitable, they supplied produce and milk, especially for Lee Station which was a limestone quarry in operation for the copper smelter in Douglas. They also started a well drilling business and put in wells in southern Arizona and for the Governor of Sonora in Mexico.

STAGECOACH ROUTE ACROSS COCHISE COUNTY

Looking for a fun family activity when you come for the reunion? How about following the trail of the Butterfield Overland Stage route? Roads and railways today follow along the route of three of the five stops in Cochise County. The stations, while located 8 to 20 miles apart were usually located at a source of water or a natural river crossing. Starting near the New Mexico border, the first station was on the east bank of the San Simon River but this one might be hard to find. Better to start at the second station, Apache Pass near Ft. Bowie.

Spanish explorers in the 16th Century, on their trek looking for the Seven Cities of Cibola, named the landmarks along their route. Because of the peaks likeness to two heads, they named the mountains Dos Cabezas. The trail entered the mountains at Apache Pass and ran through a deep gorge four miles long, the most dangerous stretch in Arizona. It was the scene of many Indian attacks. The route was necessary because of the important springs here, Puerto Del Dado Springs, which translates roughly as a pass where, once entered, "the die is cast."

Though the Fort was abandoned in 1886, the remains are carefully preserved. This is your best chance of actually seeing the remains of a Butterfield Stage station along with the adobe

PRICE OF ADMISSION:

We need help in planning and funding the reunion. To help offset some of the costs of the reunion we are charging **\$10 PER PERSON**. In order to get a count of attendees to plan food and rooms, etc. we need you to prepay for your family. Please mail your check to
Sec./Treasurer: Mary Ann Wells
404 Branchwood Dr.
Rio Vista CA 94571

walls of various post buildings. Apache Pass Road follows the same route as the coaches used in 1858.

The third station was at Ewell's Springs, about five miles southwest of Dos Cabezas, toward Kansas Settlement but is most likely located now on private land. Better to go over to Highway 191 and take the Dragoon Road where the rest of the stage route closely follows the railroad and freeway. The Dragoon Springs station was located fairly close, to the southeast, of the Post Office in Dragoon.

After passing through Texas Canyon, the next stop was the San Pedro Station which was on the east bank of the river about one mile downstream from the old downtown [North] of Benson. There are two dirt roads north of the railway bridge, but the one at B.M. 3528 is probably the correct one because there is a matching road on the opposite bank of the San Pedro River. From here, the route went gradually uphill through the very small town of Mescal. If you have made it this far, you might want to visit two 'old west' attractions—in this immediate area:

MESCAL OLD WEST STUDIOS: This is a complete western town of 44 old buildings including saloons, jail, corrals and 1860's fort. Over 400 western movies, commercials and TV series were filmed here including The Young Riders and the movie Tombstone. They offer tours, especially on major holiday weekends. They will only be open on Thursday and Saturday on Labor Day Weekend.

GAMMONS GULCH GHOST TOWN:

This is a movie set near Benson that recreates an 1890's town and mining camp recreated as it really was—everything is authentic from the working telegraph to the shingle nails and even the outhouse. Open Saturday or for groups.